



# VAMC Anchor

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## ***Put Yourself in the Driver's Seat!***

*Improving Our Work IS our work!*

About a month ago, we had a Fair to introduce everyone to the world of Systems Redesign—what it's all about and how you can become a part of it.

Systems Redesign for us started back in 2009 with the hiring of a new Systems Redesign Coordinator (Bob Harris) along with a three-year, \$1.3M Improvement Capability Grant to help develop a culture of continuous improvement. The goal is to train 180 improvement advisors to work with teams throughout the facility to find ways to improve timeliness, efficiency, and quality of care. We've made some great progress



Mary Winn, RN (ED); Jim Schlosser, MD, Director, VISN 1 Improvement Resource Office; Keerthi Madala, Industrial Engineer; and Peg Dyer, RN, Program Director

to date. Several of you have already slid in behind the wheel. Bob Harris, Mary Ellen Bouley, Albert Curley, Anthony D'Eramo, Kim DeMasi, Meg Gordon, Megan Gromer, Michael McRae, Marie Sullivan, and Jessica Zuehlke have been trained as improvement advisors and are actively engaged in several projects, from streamlining the enrollment process, to improving patient flow, to improving the Telephone Assistance Program. Moustapha Faye, Kathleen Gabriel, and Erinn Raimondi have been trained in an improvement technique called "LEAN." But there's plenty of opportunity to expand the program. *In fact, we want to put YOU in the driver's seat!*

So if you're looking for a challenge...if you want to develop some new competencies, climb out of your silos and build new relationships, or just plain get involved as a team member or a trained improvement advisor...now's your chance. Contact one of the improvement advisors above or contact Bob Harris directly at ext. 3095 ([Robert.Harris2@va.gov](mailto:Robert.Harris2@va.gov)).

Bob would like to thank all for making the Systems Redesign Fair a success. Remember, *improving our work IS our work!*



### September 2010

Benjamin Follen (Diagnostic Imaging)  
Joan Jimenez (Facilities Management)  
Jacob Miranda (Housekeeping)  
Richard Pointon (Facilities Management)  
Michael Session (Housekeeping)  
Timothy Manley (Info & Technology)  
Jerri Jaffa (Medical Service)  
Rebecca Zisseron (MHBSS)  
Meredith Klump (MHBSS)  
Laura Theodor (MHBSS)  
Michele Fox (Nursing Service)  
Elena Perez (Nursing Service)  
Emily Daniell (Nursing Service)  
Melissa Sardinha (Nursing Service)  
Amanda Vares (Nursing Service)  
Joseph O'Connor (Primary Care)  
Frances Riessen (Primary Care)  
Alicia Roberts (Primary Care)  
Rachel Sorensen (Primary Care)  
Sandra Deangelis (Prosthetics Research)  
Heather Johnson (Research)  
Julie Newton (Research)  
Laura Anderson (Sensory & Rehab)  
Zakiyyah Id-Deen (Social Work Service)  
Nirali Patel (Surgical Service)  
Marguerite Mariconti (Surgical Service)

## **PVAMC Unveils New Surgical Suite & Mental Health Unit**

*PVAMC's modernization efforts continue to bear fruit (See page 2)*



Dr. Benjamin Jackson (former Chief, Surgical Service); Bill Burney, Dr. Michael Zezeridis, Dean Glenn Tung (Brown University); and U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse during Surgical Suite ribbon cut.



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## Director's Spotlight

*What do our Veterans really want?*

There has been a great deal of talk about transformation in the VA these days—both nationally and right here in the VISN. In fact, the VISN has recently conducted some focus group discussions with several of our stakeholders--Veterans, members of the Veterans Service Organizations, as well as Congressional representatives--to get a better handle on what they consider to be the key measures of success. While we still plan to have more discussions over the next couple of months, we've already been able to draw some pretty significant conclusions. There are five key measures of success that our Veterans are telling us in virtually all circumstances:

Access  
Responsiveness  
Communications  
Outreach  
Coordination of Care/Case Management

As I reflect on this list, I've come to realize that it's really all about the basics. Are we providing our Veterans appointments when they want them—at times convenient to them? Are we answering the phone in a timely and courteous manner? There's a huge knowledge deficit out there in terms of what Veterans are entitled to and what services we can provide. We certainly need to do a better job communicating and reaching out to them. Finally, we can no longer expect to provide safe, high quality healthcare in a vacuum. That's why coordination of care/case management has become so important.

Very soon, we hope to engage each one of you in a similar dialogue to explore what transformation means to us here at the Providence VA Medical Center. This will not be a dialogue for just the front office or just for the service chiefs. Rather, it will—it must--be a dialogue that involves all of us. Please stay tuned for how you can contribute to this dialogue. I sincerely hope that you will.

WILLIAM J. BURNEY  
Acting Medical Center Director

## "PVAMC Modernization" (Con't from page 1)

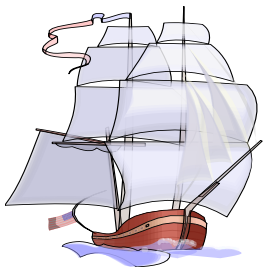
*On November 1, PVAMC opened a state-of-the-art Surgical Suite—a 14,000 square-foot, \$10 million effort that includes 3 new general operating rooms, an Angiography procedure room, a Cystoscopy procedure room, a minor procedure room, and an 11-bed Post-Anesthesia Care Unit. The new Suite allows the Medical Center to consolidate a number of surgical functions that were presently located in different parts of the main building.*

*Earlier this past September, PVAMC opened a new 11,500 square foot Inpatient Mental Health Unit on 4A. All of the patient rooms on the Unit have either one or two beds (a total of 21 beds) as well as an adjacent bathroom, offering increased privacy and security, particularly for women Veterans. The new unit has specially-designed fixtures that reduce the risk of injury while increasing patient comfort.*

*PVAMC continues to modernize its infrastructure to provide eligible Veterans with the comprehensive brand of care they deserve. Future projects include a new Emergency Department, a new Intensive Care Unit, a new Specialty Clinic Addition, and a new Outpatient Pharmacy, so...stay tuned!*

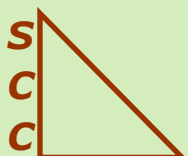


*A two-bedroom patient room on the new Inpatient Mental Health Unit*



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## Hepatology

### Specialty Clinic Corner

**1. Overview:** The outpatient Hepatology Clinic, in conjunction with the 4B Endoscopy Unit and ADTU unit, manages patients with a variety of disorders of the hepatic system to include Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, alcoholic liver disease, hemochromatosis (iron overload), nonalcoholic steatohepatitis ("silent" liver disease), liver cancer, and advanced cirrhosis. The outpatient Hepatology Clinic refers many patients for endoscopic procedures, liver biopsies, and paracentesis (drainage of fluid from a body cavity). The outpatient Hepatology clinic also serves as a training site for the Brown University GI fellows. The Clinic is held weekly and is staffed by an attending hepatologist, two-to-three GI fellows on a rotating basis, and two nurse practitioners with the assistance of Clinic B staff. A pharmacist also provides a wealth of experience in the treatment of Hepatitis C and management of the side effects associated with treatment.

**2. Treatment and Testing Services:** Treatment and testing service include:

- A history and physical examination by the provider;
- Ordering of diagnostic testing to include radiology, laboratory, endoscopic procedures, liver biopsy, paracentesis, and phlebotomy;
- Hepatitis C treatment with close monitoring for side effects;
- Referral of patients for specialized treatments such as surgical intervention at Boston VAHCS or local tumor ablation at Rhode Island Hospital;
- Referral of patients via VA Central Office liver transplant referral for evaluation at Pittsburgh VAHCS;
- Medication management for patients with advanced liver disease, hepatitis B therapy, Hepatitis C therapy, and post-liver transplant.

**3. Workload:** The Hepatology Clinic had 940 visits in FY 10.

**4. Patient Education:** All GI providers participate in patient/family education and provide written educational pamphlets during clinic visits.

**5. Did you know?**

- In the VA system between 2000 and 2007, there was nearly a three-fold increase in the number of Veterans with cirrhosis and a five-fold increase in Veterans with liver cancer. (VA Hepatitis C Clinical Case Registry)
- In 2007, the Hepatitis B virus was discovered in the liver of a 500-year old South Korean Handong mummy!

### Rockettes Visit



Radio City Rockettes Jennifer Fait and Laura Danelski paid a surprise visit to inpatient Veterans on Veterans Day. The Rockettes also gave a Special Private Dress Rehearsal to ~2000 Veterans and family members that evening at the Providence Performing Arts Center.

### Wreaths-across-America

Last month, Veterans Ray Agin, Frank Quagan, Walter Judd, Daisy Gabrielle, and Julie Lyons talked to a group of middle school students at Ponaganset Middle School as part of [Wreaths-Across-America.org](http://Wreaths-Across-America.org), whose mission is to "Remember-Honor-Teach."

Ray, Frank, Walter and Daisy are visually-impaired and part of the VIST program here at PVAMC. Julie is an intern working with VIST Coordinator Adele Geringer. Each Veteran talked about their experiences while serving our country.



### The Case of the Kidnapped Stepsister

Due to the large number of correct submissions, winners of September's **Intrepid Detective** were selected via a drawing. This month's winners are Jodie Drapeau, Maria Horridge, Jayne Furze, Kimberly Choplin, Ann Deware, and Kimberly Godfrin. Each will receive 2 free movie passes.

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## Staff in the News



### EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

**Eric Paquet, RN, Surgical Service**, was selected **Employee of the Quarter**, for quarter **October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010**



### ...Around the PVAMC...

(Pictured counter-clockwise from top): **Jayne Furze, RD**, Nutrition and Food Service, receives a **25-year service pin**; **Officer Walter Goulden** receives a **35-year service pin** (Walter retired in October); **Rochelle Fortin, LICSW, BCD**, OEF/OIF Program Manager, receives the **Hospital Association of Rhode Island Award for Excellence in Hospital Care**; and **Kiernan O'Connor** (Library Service) and **Arminda Rosales** (Police Service) offer [information on gun safety](#) just in time for Fall Hunting Season.

Also: **Janet Jaquinto**, Pharmacy Service, received a **35-year service pin**; **Dr. Bernard Zimmerman**, Medical Service, received a **30-year service pin**; **Kerry L. LaPlante, Pharm.D.**, received the **Young Investigator of the Year Award** from the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists; **Andrea Dooley, Pharm.D.**, received the **2010 Certified Diabetes Outpatient Educator (CDOE) Pharmacist of the Year Award**; **Tracey Taveira, Pharm.D., CDOE**, has been appointed **Adjunct Associate Professor of Medicine at Brown University**; **Rob Dufresne, Pharm.D., PhD, BCPS-Psychiatric Pharmacy**, successfully completed the extensive recertification process as a **Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist in Psychiatry Pharmacy**.

Congratulations to all!



### Got Story Ideas?

Please submit your ideas to  
[Thomas.Antonaccio@va.gov](mailto:Thomas.Antonaccio@va.gov).

### PVAMC Website



### Need Enrollment Info?

Please call (401) 273-7100, ext. 3300